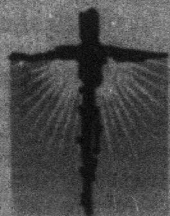


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MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

Record

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Persecution in Pakistan, Bangladesh

GOJRA, Pakistan (BP) — Islamic extremists on August 1 set ablaze more than 50 houses and a church in northeastern Pakistan following an accusation of blasphemy of the Quran, the Muslim holy book. At least 14 Christians were killed, sources said.

The dead include women and children, with several burn victims unable to reach hospitals for medical care, according to the Centre for Legal Aid Assistance and Settlement (CLAAS). The attack came amid a protest by thousands of Muslim Islamists, including members of banned militant groups, that resulted in another six people dying when participants shot at police and officers responded with tear gas and gunfire.

The same rumor of desecration of the Quran that led to the August 1 massive protest and attack in the northeastern city of Gojra also prompted an arson assault July 30 by Islamic extremists on the village of Korian, seven miles from Gojra, that gutted 60 houses.

Punjab Minister for Law Rana Sanaullah reportedly said an initial investigation of allegations of the Quran being blasphemed indicated "there has not been any incident of desecration."

Because of the earlier assault in Korian, Pakistani officials were already in the area and had sought reinforcements to help control the August 1 demonstration in Gojra, but security forces were slow to respond, according to CLAAS. "There were unaccountable people in the mob and they were out of control because only four police constables were trying to stop the mob of thousands of people," a CLAAS report said.

Crowd size and attacks grew, and Islamists managed to block main roads and railways to keep fire brigades from fighting the house fires, according to CLAAS. With authorities also blocking roads to keep more Muslim extremists from entering from neighboring villages, clerics at local mosques broadcast messages that those "who love Muhammad and Islam should gather with them to defend the Islam because it is in danger," according to CLAAS.

Asam Masih, a Christian in Gojra, said that that women and children were severely burned and had no way to get to a hospital, according to CLAAS, which was helping to transport victims for medical care. Islamists set on fire a Catholic church on Sumandri road and destroyed it using firearms and explosives, according to CLAAS.

Meanwhile, police in western Bangladesh tortured a pastor and two other Christians for legally proclaiming Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Habibur Rahman, 45, pastor of Boalia Spiritual Church in Boalia in Cuadanga district, 136 miles west of Dhaka, said he was about to meet with 11 others for a monthly meeting on evangelism June 8 when local police stormed in and seized him and Zahid Hassan, 25, and a 40-year-old Christian identified only as Fazlur.



"Police hurt our hands, lips, thighs and faces with burning cigarettes. They beat me in the joints of my limbs with a wooden club. They beat us for one hour, and I became senseless at some point," the pastor was quoted as saying.

Police officers told Rahman to admit that whatever he had done in his life was wrong, he said. When they sent them to Boalia police station early the next morning, dozens of Christians arrived to try to obtain their release. Police, however, were reluctant to release the detained Christians.

"Some Christian villagers then said, 'We are also criminal because we believe in Christ like Habibur Rahman and the other two Christians,'" Rahman said. "They told police, 'If you do not release them, then arrest us and put us in jail.'" Police did not release the three Christians until later that night.

The next day, June 10, thousands of Muslim villagers demonstrated in front of a local government office, called the Zamzami Union Council, chanting, "We want a Christian-free society," and "We will not allow any Christians in Cuadanga."

The frenzied mob called for Rahman to appear at the local government office, and a sub-district administrative chief called in 10 Christians and 10 Muslims including imams to try to resolve the matter. In that meeting, the administrative official told everyone to practice their religion freely without disturbing others.

Police denied carrying out any torture, saying they arrested the Christians for interrogation because villagers had informed officers that some underground Maoist terrorists had gathered in the house.

Jotish Biswas, executive director of Way of Life Trust, said the marks of torture were unmistakable.

"There were streaks of blood on their legs, hands, and faces," said Biswas, who interceded with police on behalf of the arrested Christians. "I have seen marks of cigarette burns on their bodies. They were beaten so severely that they could not walk properly."

Biswas said he had learned that a local official and some Muslim clerics had prompted police to torture the Christians because they objected to their evangelistic activity.

"Police violated the rights of minorities enshrined in the Bangladeshi constitution," Biswas said. "It was a gross violation of human rights."

Local Muslim villagers have since refused to give work to area Christians, most of whom are day laborers dependent on obtaining daily jobs to survive.

The first question the police commander asked him, Rahman said, was, "Why did you become Christian?"

"Using a lot of filthy words, he charged me that I was teaching the Bible and converting people to Christianity in this area," the pastor told Compass Direct News.

In May, a police patrol chief had threatened to seize him at a church meeting but was misinformed about the time it would take place, Rahman said.

The commander who seized him and the two others was a sub-inspector with the name Khaleque on his badge, Rahman said. Police dragged them to a nearby parked vehicle and transported them to Shamvunagar police camp.

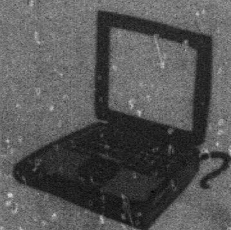
"Police told us, 'We will teach you in the camp how to forget your Christ,' while dragging us to the vehicle," Rahman said.

Police blindfolded them after reaching the camp and took them to three separate rooms. "I heard blood-curdling scream from other rooms," Rahman said. "I was sitting on the floor blindfolded. I could not understand what was happening around me."

"Later several police came to me and one of them kicked me on the back of my head, and my head ricocheted off the wall. They also kicked my waist."

Ordering him to say how many people he had converted to Christianity in the Muslim-majority nation, the commander said he would kick him a like number of times. The official told him to call out to Jesus, saying he wanted to see how Jesus would save him, Rahman said.

"While beating us, police told us there will be no Christian in this area," the pastor said.



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It's school time, prayer time

Kids are sad; parents are elated. Lines are long, traffic is at a fever pitch, and patience is low, but that's all right. It's back-to-school week across most of Mississippi.

Tenderfoot parents are experiencing this phenomenon for the first time with both excitement and anxiety, while parents on the other end of the time line approach their final back-to-school week with — you guessed it — excitement and anxiety. We should say a prayer for all of them.

We should also pray for teachers and school administrators everywhere. So committed are they to their life mission that they are willing to forsake better salaries, waive better working conditions, and endure extreme pressure from all directions just to educate

our children. There are very few higher and more precious callings.

Many of those teachers and school administrators are Mississippi Baptists. Many of them pray for their peers and for the students with whom they are entrusted, ever mindful of the legal and career ramifications for doing so in public. Many of them conducted prayer meetings and prayer walks in and around their schools over the past few weeks in preparation for the new school year, again mindful of the consequences of doing so.

They need all the spiritual support they can get. In California, children as young as kindergarten are legally required to declare what they believe their gender to be — male or female, the child gets to decide whether they are a boy or a girl regardless of anatomical facts. Refusal to follow the state's man-

"SHE'S JUST STARTED TO KINDERGARTEN AND ALREADY I CAN FEEL MY NEST BEGINNING TO EMPTY!"



date by a school board or a principal or teacher can trigger a full-blown investigation by that state's attorney general.

In several hot spots around the country, battles rage between the true believers of evolution and proponents of intelligent design. Thanksgiving and Christmas seasons will be stripped of any spiritual meaning and renamed "harvest festivals" and "winter celebrations." (Halloween, however, will still be allowed under its traditional name.)

Mentioning God is verboten, a violation of church and state separation under the bizarre arguments of liberal extremist groups like the ACLU. Judeo-Christian subjects are off-limits, while fringe "religions"

are highlighted and celebrated. Christian student groups must get a federal court order to hold meetings at the school, while homosexual student groups are welcomed with open arms. Religious-themed clothing is not permissible, but the display of tongue piercings and offensive symbols is protected.

Lastly, for all the reasons above and for many, many more reasons, we should pray for the students. In the coming weeks and months of this new school year, even the most sheltered children will be bombarded with ideas and temptations that could not have been imagined just a generation ago — public and private schools alike.

It's difficult enough to stem the constant flow of cultural sewage into our homes, but it's near impossible to control at school.

Our prayers for Christian students should be two-fold. First, we should pray that they will remain spiritually grounded and steadfast against the allure and bright lights in which the world wraps sin. We should pray that their discernment will be strong

enough to avoid the snares and pitfalls they will encounter.

Secondly, we should pray without ceasing for their witness to non-believers. Although fringe elements in the Southern Baptist Convention are advocating abandonment of what they call "God-less" schools, our command from our Savior is to take the Gospel to the world (Matthew 28:18-20). Pray that they will remain faithful to this most important mission in the face of adversity, and pray that you will be a shining example to light their way.

It's a big, lost world out there, and our responsibility is to spread the message of Jesus Christ wherever we go. Let's get busy.

GUEST OPINION:



Get relevant

By Page Brooks
New Orleans Seminary

What is the meaning of life? How can I have happiness?

We live in a culture that is no longer a predominantly Christian culture, so how can we answer the questions the culture is asking while still maintaining our biblical witness without compromising our speech or actions?

First of all, the church needs to listen. Many of our programmatic and felt-needs sermons are actually not answering the questions of the culture. The culture does not want to just know answers; they want to know biblical answers to those tough ques-

tions and yes, some of those questions may make some of our church people blush when they are asked.

Secondly, I believe the church needs seriously to examine the language it uses to communicate the Gospel. On the one hand, we do not need to compromise our own language, just as Paul commanded for all of our language to be above reproach (Ephesians 5:4). We need to be willing to examine our own language to make sure we are speaking in ways that can allow someone from today's culture — not yesterday's society — to understand.

Lastly, we must be willing to move out of our comfort zone in order to reach today's generation. We have developed too much of a "church culture" which has become culturally irrelevant. We have developed so much of our own ways of speaking and acting that we have become disconnected from the world.

In other words, we have become so accustomed to our own church culture that we are not only shocked but also embarrassed when the culture asks questions.

Yes, the Bible has plenty to say on hard topics, as well as the hardest topic of all — the eternal destiny of our souls. The hard question for the church at this time is if we are willing to do what it takes to answer them in a way that is relevant but also above reproach.

Brooks is assistant professor of theology and Islamic studies at New Orleans Seminary. He has served as a church planter, pastor, and Army chaplain. His commentary appears courtesy of Baptist Press.

ERLC: health bill deadly for young, elders

WASHINGTON (BP) — The health-care reform bill making its way through the U.S. House of Representatives "is extremely dangerous legislation to the health and wellbeing of most Americans" for a variety of reasons, the Southern Baptist Convention's ethics entity says.

The proposal — America's Affordable Health Choices Act, H.R. 3200 — would endanger the lives of the unborn and elderly, increase taxes and health-care costs, and extend government's reach into Americans' private lives, according to an analysis by the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) of the Southern Baptist Convention, headquartered in Nashville.

While acknowledging the measure's 1,018 pages and voluminous citations make "it nearly impossible to figure out what everything in the bill actually means," the ERLC says it can report "with absolute certainty" the proposal "will lead to diminished health care for most Americans, less choice, higher taxes, and unprecedented government intrusion into every level and aspect of society, from business, to education, to marriage, to individual liberty."

The commission posted the nine-page analysis on its website (www.eric.com) August 3 as the House began a five-week recess. Three different House committees have approved H.R. 3200. Some House members returned to their districts to face combative crowds expressing their opposition to the legislation at town hall meetings.

Health-care reform in the Senate is focused on the Finance Committee, where its chairman, Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., is

leading an effort to craft a bipartisan agreement. The Senate went into recess August 7.

President Obama, meanwhile, continues to urge Congress to act on the issue, one of his primary legislative initiatives.

In its analysis, the ERLC cites the following among the problems it sees in H.R. 3200:

- The bill is certain to result in mandated, federal funding of abortion.

- A program in the measure that likely would provide education about decisions near the end of life "could essentially encourage the premature death of the elderly" and could produce a "slippery slope that potentially leads to euthanasia."

- Rationing of health care would result if the bill is enacted in its present form, and even if the public option does not survive, rationing would be likely because of the requirements imposed on private insurance companies.

- Government officials, rather than private citizens, would determine the type of health care received by Americans under the

public insurance option established by the secretary of Health and Human Services.

- Individuals and employers would be taxed if their private insurance plans are not acceptable to the federal government.

- Hospitals will be penalized if patients have to be readmitted, possibly prompting health-care institutions to keep people longer than necessary or to refuse to admit them.

- Americans would pay higher taxes to fill a public health fund.

- Private insurers may not be able to write new policies for potential customers.

- The government would be permitted to access citizens' financial records, as well as their bank accounts for the transfer of electronic funds.

- "Home visitation programs" would be established by which the government could make "voluntary" visits to families with small children or families expecting babies for the purpose of improving the "well-being, health and development of children."

- An advisory committee led by the U.S. surgeon general will recommend benefits to be received by citizens.

- A Center for Comparative Effectiveness Research will be established, which could result in therapies and drugs being evaluated on a cost basis instead of a clinical basis, critics have said.

The analysis explains how an amendment approved in the House Energy and Commerce Committee does not maintain the current policy preventing federal funds for most abortions but explicitly includes abortion coverage under the legislation.

"At this time, abortion is not explicitly defined as an essential benefit in the bill," according to the ERLC analysis. "However, the terminology in [Section 122 of the bill] is vague enough to allow for abortion. It could easily fall under the 'Preventive Services' requirement. An advisory panel appointed by a pro-abortion president is certainly going to come to the conclusion that abortion should be included in the essential benefits package."

Sotomayor confirmed for high court

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Senate confirmed Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court August 6 in a 68-31 vote, providing the country's highest judicial panel with its first Hispanic and third female member. Sotomayor will sit with the other justices for oral arguments for the first time Oct. 5, when the high court's next term begins.

In the end, nine GOP senators supported Sotomayor's confirmation. Each of the 31 "nay" votes came from Republicans.

All 59 Democrats present for the roll call voted for confirmation. Mississippi's senators, Thad Cochran and Roger Wicker, voted against Sotomayor.

Southern Baptist public policy specialist Barrett Duke called Sotomayor's confirmation "the most far-reaching consequence of the 2008 elections to date."

"Fortunately, the confirmation of Judge Sotomayor merely replaces a liberal with a liberal," said Duke, the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's vice president for public policy. "The balance of the court is not significantly affected. However, everyone should recognize that her addition to the court extends the longevity of liberal, pro-abortion ideology on the nation's highest court."

Duke has "deep concerns" about her "ability to subordinate her ideological biases to the Constitution's objective standards."

"We must all pray that God will give [Sotomayor] — as well as all of the other Supreme Court justices — wisdom as she sets herself to the task of judging impartially," he said.

Some GOP senators, as well as the ERLC and other pro-life organizations, questioned her participation for 12 years on the board of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund, which filed at least six legal briefs in support of the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* opinion legalizing abortion.

The ERLC had indicated its opposition to Sotomayor's confirmation after an analysis of her record and reiterated it in a letter to the Judiciary Committee July 28, the day the panel voted 13-6 to send her nomination to the full Senate.

Sotomayor, 55, will not be the high court's youngest member. Chief Justice John Roberts, appointed by President George W. Bush, is 54.

Looking back

10 years ago

If present trends continue, bivocational Southern Baptist pastors will outnumber full-time pastors within 10 years, according to Carl Barrington, national missionary for tentmaking ministries at the North American Mission Board in Alpharetta, Ga.

20 years ago

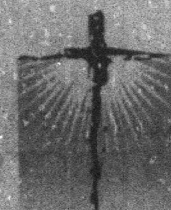
Baptist Sunday School Board trustees turn aside an effort to fire board president Lloyd Elder. While expressing support for his presidency, the trustees also rebuke him for what they perceive to be his involvement in denominational politics.

50 years ago

Open house is held for the new elementary building of First Church, Columbus, Aug. 9. The building is designed for 400 students — nursery, beginners, and primaries.

Presbyterians drop

NASHVILLE, Tn. (BP) — The Presbyterian Church (USA) suffered its largest single-year decline in membership in 25 years, losing nearly 70,000 people in 2008. Church officials in Louisville, Ky., announced this summer that total membership now is just over two million in more than 10,000 congregations. Jack Marcum, the denomination's coordinator of research services, said the main cause for the decline is demographic. Like other denominations, pews are filled more with older people than younger. Compared to the 34,000 Presbyterian funerals last year, the church recorded fewer than 26,000 baptisms of children, Marcum told *The Tennessean* newspaper in Nashville. Twenty-five churches, representing 34,340 members, left to join other denominations. Marcum also noted that Presbyterians "shy away from evangelism" and only added around 6,000 new members through adult baptisms last year. Church planting also is suffering, the newspaper said. "Since the 1960s, few new churches have been started, and so most Presbyterian churches aren't in growing population centers," *The Tennessean* said. "Last year the denomination started only 30 new churches, or one for every 330 or so churches. The Southern Baptist Convention, by contrast, starts one new church for about every 30 established churches." The Southern Baptist Convention recorded a modest 2% drop in membership. Most of the people who have left the Presbyterian Church haven't necessarily joined another denomination. They seem to have fallen out of the habit of churchgoing, Marcum said, citing "people who are just drifting away from church."



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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YOU CAN RESPOND
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

BIBLIOCIPHER

By Charles McVay, 1932-2004
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Q M U A O Y U A
PSYAKPOAV PKV
AKAUYAQ YK CMHN
UYKV RC FYIWAV
FMNWQ, CAO KMF
ZPOZ ZA NAIMKIYSAV.

IMSMQQYPKQ MKA:
OFAKOC-MKA

Clue: C=Y

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Romans Twelve: Twenty

ADDING BEAUTY TO BEAUTY

One Sunday morning I was on my way to a preaching engagement and I arrived considerably early at the town where I was supposed to be. On the way to the church, I had just stopped by a store to run in and pick up a pack of gum when I saw one of our preachers down the aisle. I went over and spoke to him, and since we were both out of town, he told me that they had come the night before and on Sunday morning when they were getting ready, his wife realized that she had not brought her makeup. I asked, "Is she here?" He replied, "Yes, she is over at the makeup counter." I walked over to where she was standing with her back to me. I asked, "Lady, can I help you find something?" he turned around, saw me, and it would probably be best if I did not describe the next few minutes.

While I suppose you could go to church without any makeup, I also suppose that some folks might not notice. I am confident that most of the ladies, if not all in the reading audience, would prefer to get their face fixed before heading out into the public. For those of us who are non-makeup wearing and borderline ugly men, I must confess that we may not notice as well as we ought to but she looked fine to me. However, from her perspective, she was not presenting herself in the best way,

and she was anxious to get herself put together.

I was reminded of an insightful and beautiful truth that the Apostle Paul wrote in the book of Titus. The verse is found in Chapter 2, verse 10. He has been addressing every group in the church — young men, young women, older men, older women, and servants in the church. This is what he says concerning their life being parallel to their experience in the Lord: "So that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things." That word *adorn* in a kind of a literal paraphrase would be something like to *add beauty to beauty*.

Truthfully, that is what so many ladies do when they put on their makeup, lipstick, shadows, and whatever else may be a part of the process. They *add beauty to beauty*. Here the Apostle Paul is telling folks that they need to give attention to what they look like, how they present themselves, and how they appear in public. He offers to them encouragement to put on a little bit of spiritual makeup. I can hear some folks even now



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

saying, "Well, I'm not going to do that. I'm not going to put on any airs. I'm not going to pretend to be something that I'm not. I'm what I am, and to pretend to be anything other than that would be hypocritical."

That is not what the Scripture is trying to get us to see. What Paul is pointing us to is the fact that our lives should be in line with what the Scripture teaches and with what the Gospel of Jesus brings to our lives. He is not encouraging hypocrisy. He is encouraging genuineness and authenticity in our walk with the Lord. You say you are a Christian, well then talk like one. You say you know Jesus, then walk like He walked. You say you have met a Savior that has freed you from sin and given you a new life, well live it and let others see it. If you have truly met Jesus, to live otherwise is hypocritical so look closely at your life being aligned with the truth of the Word of God. The Good News of Jesus is beautiful. Seeing it demonstrated and lived out in the flesh in a saint's life is simply adding beauty to beauty.

I know that the lady I saw who had forgotten her makeup kit was embarrassed, but she should not be nearly so embar-

rassed as many of us should be who head off to the work place without the gracious teachings of Jesus flowing through our lives. Maybe a person gets involved in a business deal and overlooks bringing biblically-sound ethics to the table. Maybe it is at a ballgame where in our exuberance or sometimes anger we begin to display actions that are anything but Christlike. It may be just a sour attitude worn to church.

You cannot find any of this at the makeup counter of your local store, but you can find it in great abundance from the gracious hand of Jesus. Take a moment today and ask God how He would add some *beauty to beauty* in your life.

The author can be contacted at jfutral@mbcb.org.

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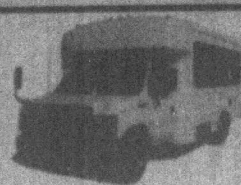
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HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

August 13, 2009

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.

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All Events are in the BSU CENTERS unless otherwise noted.

BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Noonday - Mon, Tues, Thurs, 1:00 p.m.
Prime Time - Worship - Mon, 7:00 p.m.
every other week

CO-LIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Praise/Worship - Mon, 6:15 p.m.
Dorm Bible Study - Tues, 8:00 p.m.
Chapel - Wed, 11:00 a.m.
Nursing Home Ministry - Thurs, 2:00 p.m.

DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Bible Study/Lunch - Wed, noon
Focus - Worship - Thurs, 6:30 p.m.

EAST CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Worship - Mon, 8:31 p.m.
Bible Study in Dorms - Tues evenings
Lunch & Devotion - Wed, noon

GULF COAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

JEFF DAVIS CAMPUS
Lunch Program - Wed, noon
Small Groups - Weekdays, noon

JACKSON COUNTY CAMPUS

Lunch Program - Tues, 12:15 p.m.
Bible Study - Thurs, 12:15 p.m.

PERKINSTON CAMPUS

Worship/Fellowship - Tues, 7:00 p.m.
Bible Study - Thurs, TBA

HINDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE RAYMOND CAMPUS

Worship - Tues, 7:00 p.m.
Lunch - Thurs, 12:30 p.m.
Small Group Bible Study - Thurs, TBA

HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE GOODMAN CAMPUS

Worship & Bible Study - Tues, 6:00 p.m.
Lunch & Devotion - Thurs, 11:00 a.m.

HOLMES COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRENADA CAMPUS

Lunch & Devotion - Thurs, 12:15 p.m.

ITAWAMBA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

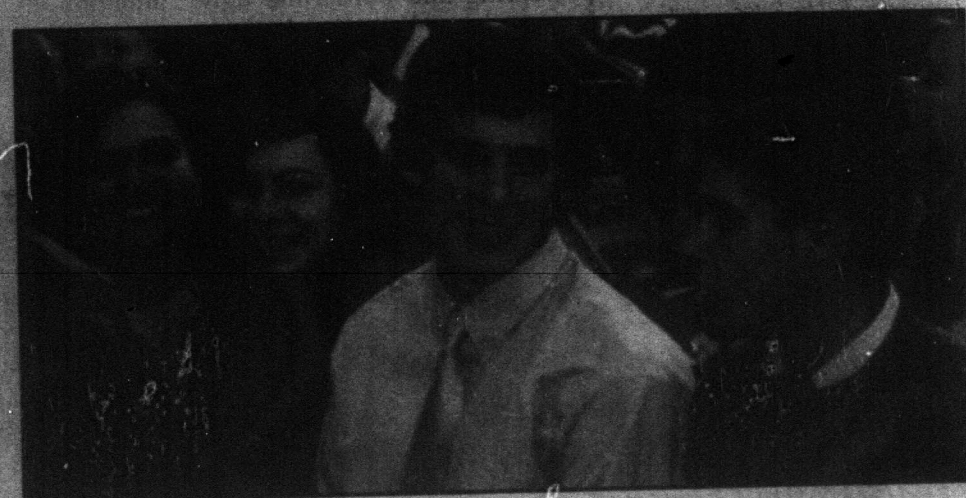
Luncheon - Wed, 12:07 p.m.
Worship - Wed, 7:07 p.m.

JONES COUNTY JUNIOR COLLEGE

Worship - Tues, 6:30 p.m.
Noonday Lunch - Wed, 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Food, Fellowship & Devotion - Wed,
11:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m., Campus Chapel
The Gathering (Worship) - First Tues of Month,
7:00 p.m., Campus Chapel



MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE

Vision - Mon, 6:30 p.m., FBC, Chapel
Focus Groups/Bible Study - Tues & Thurs, TBA

MISSISSIPPI DELTA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Worship & Fellowship - Mon, 7:00 p.m.
Bible Study - Tues, 9:00 p.m., Dorms
Noonday Lunch & Devotion - Wed, noon

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Praise & Worship - Tues, 6:15 p.m.
Noonday Lunch - Wed, noon
Web site: www.msusbu.com

MISSISSIPPI UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

Lunch & Bible Study - Wed, 11:30 a.m.

NORTHEAST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Worship Service - Tues, 6:30 p.m.
Bible Study Luncheon - Thurs, 10:40 a.m.

NORTHWEST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Worship & Bible Study - Tues, 7:00 p.m., Senatobia
Lunch & Bible Study - Wed, noon, DeSoto Center, classroom, TBA
Dorm Bible Studies - Wed, nights, Senatobia, Time TBA

PEARL RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Worship - Mon, 6:33 p.m.
Lunch Encounter - Thurs, 11:00 a.m.
"IGNITION" - Weekly Prayer Group, Thurs, 9:00 p.m.
Lunch Encounter - Wed, noon, Hattiesburg

SOUTHWEST MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Lunch & Devotion - Mon, 11:45 a.m.
The Shed - Bible Study - Mon, 7:00 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

"Main Event" - Worship - Tues, 7:00 p.m.
Lunch Encounter - Wed, noon
Fresh Start - Freshmen & Transfers, Thurs, 7:00 p.m.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

"CoffeeTalk" - Outreach to Internationals
Mon, 8:00 p.m.
6:01 Praise, Worship & Bible Study - Tues, 6:01 p.m.
12:01 Lunch/Devotion - Thurs, 12:01 p.m.
Web site: www.usm.edu/bsu

WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY

Campus LINK - Mon, 8:30 p.m., Student Conference Center
Prayer Breakfast - Wed, 9:30 a.m.
Priority Lunch - Thurs, 11:30 a.m., Student Conference Center

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Department
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 Your WORLD will be broadened in new and exciting ways!
 And finally, your JOURNEY will be challenged as
 you seek to be *fulfilled* in Christ.

www.fbcmb.org/events/fulfilled



Ministers' Wives Conference
 Monday, October 26, 2009, 1:15 – 4:45 p.m.
 First Baptist Church Chapel, Jackson

Nancy Burgess
 Guest Speaker

Nancy is founder and director of Heart and Soul Connection, a national, cross-denominational lifeline ministry for ministers' wives and their families.

Registration

Preregistration is encouraged so that we may better prepare.

- Phone: 800.748.1651, ext. 305, or 601.292.3305
- E-mail: kmcdonne1@mbcb.org

Pastor/Leadership Development Department

2009 STATE SENIOR ADULT RALLY
 Thursday, August 27, 8 – 11:45 a.m.
 Morrison Heights BC

For more information contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department at 601-292-3373, 1-800-748-1651, ext. 373, or E-mail gshows@mbcb.org.

Special Ministries Retreat
 September 11-12, 2009
 Garaywa, Clinton, MS

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Cost is \$40 per camper
 *This includes overnight lodging and three meals

For more information contact
 Angie Boydston at
angieboydston@mbcb.org or
 1.800.748.1651 or 601.292.3294



Your Margaret Lackey gifts allowed 129 children to make professions of faith at Central Hills last summer. Your church's participation in the offering this fall *will* make an eternal impact.

Colossians 4:2-5

RA Day
SEPTEMBER 12, 2009
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE - CLINTON

REGISTRATION 10:00 A.M. GAME 1:00 P.M.

PROGRAM 10:30 A.M. COST \$7

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**Garaywa Fall 2009
Mother/Daughter
Overnight**

October 2-3
October 16-17

For more info, contact
Robin Keels in the WMU
601-292-3322 or
rkeels@mbcb.org

**Stories
for Life**

Parables
at the
Kingdom in Matthew

**JANUARY 2010
BIBLE STUDY
PREVIEW CLINICS**

TEACHING



Gene Henderson, former pastor of FBC, Brandon, and currently a transitional pastor, Chairman of Transformation Jackson and consultant for churches in the area of leadership training

Tuesday, September 15, 2009
DELTA STATE UNIVERSITY
CLEVELAND

Wednesday, September 16, 2009
MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE
CLINTON

Thursday, September 17, 2009
WILLIAM CAREY UNIVERSITY
HATTIESBURG

Monday, September 21, 2009
BLUE MOUNTAIN COLLEGE
BLUE MOUNTAIN

ALL CONFERENCES
Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.
Conference begins at 9 a.m.
Lunch will NOT be provided
No cost, but please preregister

For more information, contact Huey Dedmon at
1-800-748-1651, ext. 320; 601-292-3320;
hdedmon@mbcb.org



Brothers, smart ladies and friends ... we have a big day planned at the start of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. Our council will convene at 3 p.m. on Monday, October 26, 2009, in the Skyroom on the 4th floor.

All Mississippi bivocational/small church **MINISTERS AND THEIR WIVES** are invited to a **BANQUET AND DIALOGUE** at 5 p.m. We will break at 6:30 to attend the Pastors Conference at First Baptist, Jackson.

Please E-mail or call Kay McDonnell (kmcdonnell@mbcb.org or 601.292.3305; 1.800.748.1651, ext. 305) to confirm your attendance.

THERE IS NO COST FOR THE MEAL. THIS EVENT IS UNDERWRITTEN BY THE PASTOR/LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION BOARD.

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For Ministers of Education
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**Tuesday, October 13
Garaywa**

For more info:
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Phone: 1-800-748-1651 ext. 291
or 601-292-3291 locally

**2010 Mississippi
Baptist
All-State
Youth Choir
and Orchestra
Auditions**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2009
10:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
Clarksdale Church, Clarksdale, MS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2009
2:00 - 4:00 P.M.
Hernando Church, Hernando, MS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2009
4:00 - 8:00 P.M.
Fairview Church, Columbus, MS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2009
10:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
First Church, Meridian, MS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2009
10:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M.
William Carey University, Hattiesburg, MS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2009
2:00 - 4:00 P.M.
Grace Memorial Church, Gulfport, MS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2009
2:00 - 4:00 P.M.
First Church, Summit, MS

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2009
2:00 - 5:00 P.M.
Baptist Building, Jackson, MS

For more information,
contact Susan Luttrell at 1-800-748-1651,
ext. 274; 601-292-3274;
sluttrell@mbcb.org

Pray this day for...

AUGUST 14-27, 2009

Prayer Ministry Office • P.O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 601-292-3204 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-7729 (PRAY)

"Search me, O God, and know my heart: test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23-24

Missions researchers have identified more than 2,000 unsaved people groups with populations of 100,000 and greater. Many of the largest people groups have Southern Baptist missionaries working among them. But many have none. Your prayers can prepare the way for the gospel to be shared among these unengaged peoples.

Pray for the REAP Ecuador Team conducting research throughout Ecuador, searching for areas that have very little or no knowledge of Christ. The people may have a unique worldview, may dress in a different way, and may speak a hard language other than Spanish. All of these factors and more call for a specialized approach for sharing the gospel.

Two Cuban Christian men, ages 79 and 86, navigate dirt roads on their bicycles, praying for rural Cubans who need Jesus. Pray that as they proclaim the love of God, the Holy Spirit will draw hundreds of people to saving faith in Jesus and God will call out more Cuban believers to take the gospel into many other rural areas.

Cross-cultural Christian workers are reporting many miracles of healing after prayer at the Bangalore Hospital in India. These miracles then result in people being saved and following Jesus as the only way. Pray that God's power will be so revealed that all who see may know the one true God who loves them and sent His only Son to die for them.

Pray for the Professional Certification and Office Skills for Ministry Assistants at Garaywa on the 18th-20th. Pray that not only will the classes be encouraging and beneficial to the ministry assistants, but also that encouraging relationships will be developed which can continue after the conference.

Pray for the Mississippi Baptist Executive Committee Meeting and the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Meeting in the Baptist Building. Pray that God will purify their hearts and speak His will to them as they make decisions. (Ezek)

Please pray for Brazilian Home and World Mission Boards as they are in a time of transition and change. Pray for the leadership of both boards, for their missionaries, and for IMB missionaries who are partnered with them, both inside of Brazil as well as in other countries. Pray for special partnerships being formed among ministries.

The music students in the school-teacher's program track of the Kenya Baptist Theological College will return for their second intense month of studies in August. Pray for both the students and the professors to be successful in preparing for the students' arrival this semester.

More than 150 years have passed since the first missionaries arrived in West Africa; yet more than 300 people groups in West Africa have not heard the name of Jesus and are not engaged by any mission organization. The majority of West Africans are non-readers or oral learners. Pray for chronological Bible story outreach among them.

BUSINESS AS MISSION-The Nairobi Business as Mission Team writes: "Presently we are preparing to select the first group of participants in evangelism/church planting/leather-crafting training. Please pray for wisdom in this selection process, as well as strength and endurance as we plan the logistics."

Please pray that God will cause new believers, E, his wife and his son, M, in Paraguay, to grow in their new walk with the Lord. Ask that they will take the steps needed to follow Jesus and His Word, including removing and destroying the household idol that sits beside their front door in memory of an infant grandchild who died.

In one part of Southeast Asia, there are still 29 people groups (each with a population of more than 50,000 people) that have no one to tell them the gospel. One of these groups, the Bru of Laos, has few or maybe no Christians. Pray that the Lord will even now prepare their hearts to receive the Truth.

The OneStory Konyakie Team, West Africa, writes: "Please pray that we will have wisdom in choosing which stories from God's Word to use with our people that will best bridge the barriers between their current beliefs and their accepting Christ as their Savior, and in choosing which Konyakie man to help us craft those stories."

Pray for the Preschool/Children Training Event at Garaywa. Reaching children at an early age is one of the most effective ways to share the gospel. Pray that the children who accept Jesus as their Savior will continue to grow in Christ throughout their childhood and into adulthood. Pray that they will be soul-winners and disciples. (Preschool/Children's Team)

Send an MK a card!



OCTOBER

2009 BIBLE DRILL CLINICS

to cover MAJOR UPDATES in Mississippi Bible Drills

LEADERSHIP TRAINING CLASSES

For leaders of Bible Buddies (Gr 1-3), Children's Bible Drill (Gr 4-6), and Student Bible Drill (Gr 7-12)

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Thursday, 9/10	Diamondhead BC, Diamondhead	6:30-8:00 p.m.
Monday, 9/14	Garaywa, Clinton	6:30-8:00 p.m.
Tuesday, 9/15	FBC, Meridian	6:30-8:00 p.m.
Thursday, 9/17	FBC, Batesville	6:30-8:00 p.m.

BIBLE DRILL LEADERS:

Student Bible Drill: Curt Lyles on 9/10, 14 and 17
Student Bible Drill: Susan Lott on 9/15

The Student leaders' clinic will cover new types of Student Drills (Quotation Drill and Key Passage Drill); the new High School Selection Tournament to select a statewide High School Winner; and new helps on or coming to www.mbc.org

Children's Bible Drill: Don Hicks on 9/10, 14, 15, 17

The children's section of the clinic will cover updates for Children's Bible Drill, new helps on or coming to www.mbc.org

For more info: Call 601-292-3287 or E-mail dhicks@mbcb.org

10-1-04
MISS MAGGIE M.
 Parents: C & A
 Restricted

10-3-97
MISS KARISSA YEAGER
 Parents: Tommy & Jennifer
 Restricted

10-4-01
MISS MICAH WORTHY
 Parents: Charlie & Shannon
 Western Europe

10-4-90
MR. MICAH MCCALL
 Parents: Dennis & Margaret
 Africa

10-8-97
MISS CATHERINE HODGINS
 Parents: Ray & Cindy
 South America

10-10-94
MR. LUKE LITTLE
 Parents: Bob & Amy
 West Africa

10-16-89
MISS RACHEL
 Parents: Jeff & Melva
 Restricted

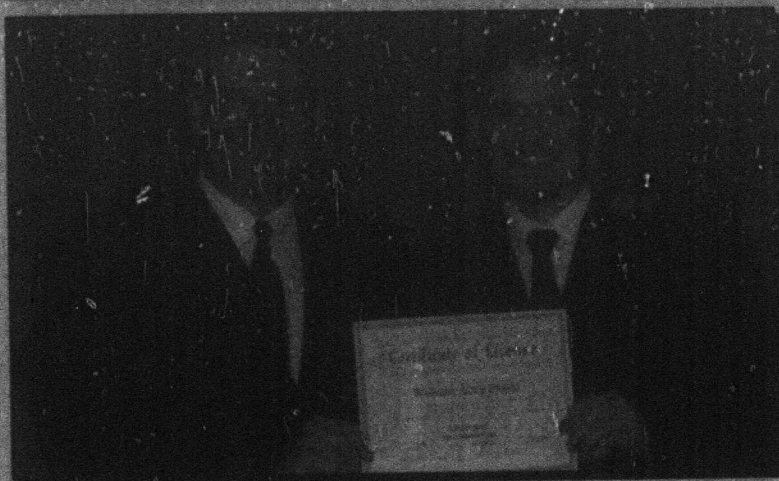
10-17-00
MISS KAYLEE
 Parents: D & D
 Restricted

10-26-06
MISS ADDISON
 Parents: James & Tracy
 Restricted

FOR SECURITY,
 cards will
 be forwarded.
 Please send all to:
 Child's name, Parent's
 name,
 MBCB
 WMU MK Birthdays,
 PO Box 530,
 Jackson MS 39205
PLEASE NOTE: Church
 members may send a
 package of cards together;
 cards do not
 have to be sent
 individually
 to the WMU.

HOUSE TOPS

JUST FOR THE RECORD



1. Hatfield and Floyd



2. Fellowship Church, Bellefontaine



3. Fellowship Church, Bellefontaine, baby dedication

1. Iuka Church, Iuka, licensed Acey Floyd to the Gospel ministry on August 2. Pictured are pastor Ronnie Hatfield (left) and Floyd.

2. Fellowship Church, Bellefontaine, recently ordained Brad Latham, Jerald Knight, Colby Sprayberry, and Justin Mason as deacons.

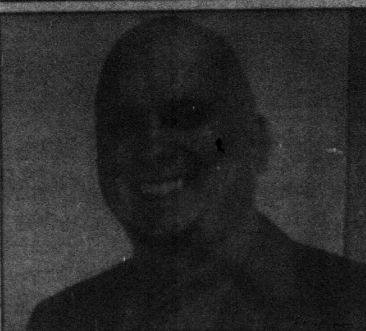
3. Fellowship Church, Bellefontaine, held baby dedication on Aug. 2. Pictured are participants.

4. New Bethel Church, Carrollton, recently honored their graduating senior, Tyler Shaw. Pictured are pastor Joseph Sansing (left) and Shaw.

5. East Prentiss Church youth attended youth camp on July 13-18 at Camp Jubilee in the mountains in Tazewell, Tn. The church's children attended Kids for Christ camp in Tishomingo. Shown are participants.

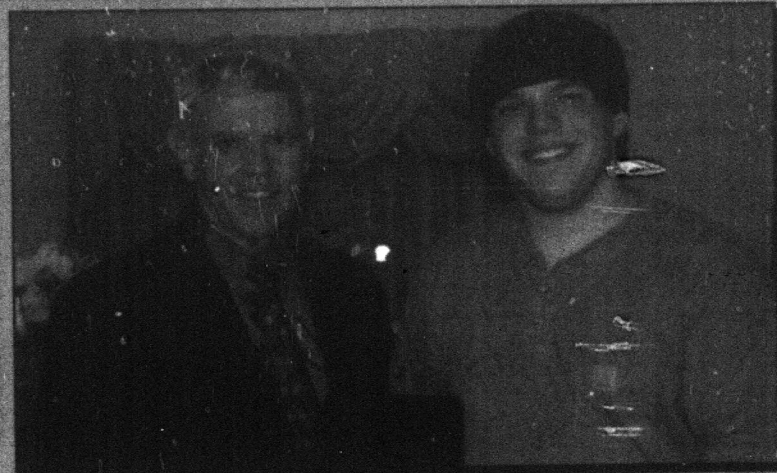


STAFF CHANGES

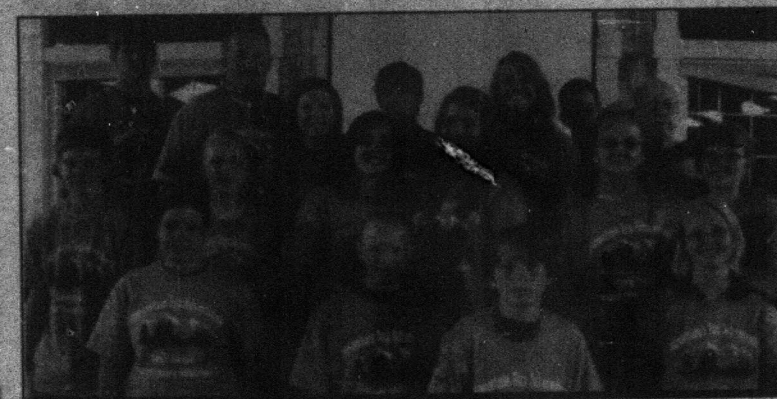


1. Meadows

1. Oak Hill Church, Meridian, recently called Josh Meadows as minister of youth.



4. New Bethel Church, Carrollton



5a. East Prentiss Church youth



5b. East Prentiss Church children

Background checks for volunteers deemed essential

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Good guys don't wear superhero capes, and bad guys don't always have shifty eyes and devious-sounding chuckles.

In real life, discerning the heroes from the villains often requires more than a visual assessment. That means you can't know whether someone is "good" or "bad" by looking at them when they walk through the front door of your church and volunteer to serve.

That's why LifeWay Christian Resources entered an agreement with backgroundchecks.com to provide discounted screenings for churches.

"It is so important in this day and time to run these checks," said Barbara Strong, church secretary at Jubilee Worship

Center in Westmoreland, Tn. Strong runs the checks for the church, which began using backgroundchecks.com about a year ago. "We just don't know who is coming into our church. We'd like to think everyone is a good Christian, but we can't know that."

About 450 churches have requested more than 5,000 background checks on volunteers and prospective employees since LifeWay began offering the service in 2008, according to data from backgroundchecks.com. Most of those searches returned clean records or minor traffic-related offenses, but 80 screenings uncovered serious felony offenses and more than 600 people had some type of crim-

inal history that may have disqualified them from volunteering or working at a church.

First Church in Estero, Fl., has had to turn away a few volunteers due to the information uncovered by backgroundchecks.com. Associate Pastor Wayne Rogers runs the checks.

"It's important that we let new folks know we will be running checks [if they volunteer]," Rogers said, adding that the church stresses the confidentiality and necessity of the process.

"When we have a negative screening result, we deal with it in a loving way. We know that people make mistakes, and we know we've been made new creations in Christ," he pointed out.

He added that, as much as possible, church leadership tries to minimize embarrassment in these cases, but that specific people — directors of the children's or youth areas, for instance — must be informed that a particular person should not be permitted around children.

"Children are our precious commodity," Rogers said. "They've been entrusted to us, and we have to protect them at any cost."

Greg Young is a buyer for LifeWay Christian Stores, but he also serves as the minister of education at Cedar Hill Church in Cedar Hill, Tn. Cedar Hill Church began using the screening service about a year ago and has so far screened 50-60

people. Young said all church staff members and all volunteers who will be working with individuals 18 years old and younger are required to submit to the screening.

In spite of church budgets that are shrinking in the current economy, Young said his church did not even consider cutting back by nixing background checks. "We're trying to make sure we provide the safest environment possible for youth and children," Young said. "Backgroundchecks.com helps us with our due diligence, and I think that's being a good steward."

For more information about background screenings, call (866) 300-8524 or visit LifeWayStores.com/backgroundchecks.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

1. Interstate Church, Shaw: July 12 - 16; 101 enrolled. Shown are the participants.
2. Branch Church, Morton: July; average attendance, 75; offering, \$320. Shown are the participants.
3. Schooner Valley Church, Houlika, recently held Vacation Bible School. Pictured are participants.



1. Interstate Church, Shaw



2. Branch Church, Morton



3. Schooner Valley Church, Houlika

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COLLEGE NEWS



2. WCU Delta Omicron triennial participants

1. Blue Mountain College Athletic teams were recently named Scholar Teams by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics. The women's basketball, men's basketball, and women's cross country earned the recognition. To be considered for the award, the teams must have a minimum 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale.
2. William Carey University's Omicron Sigma chapter of the international music fraternity Delta Omicron won

the Award for Excellence in Chapter Efficiency and a first place award for scrapbooking at the recent triennial conference in Erlanger, Ky. Josephine D'Arpa, retired WCU music professor, was named Chapter Advisor of the Year. Pictured are participants.

3. Mississippi's Family Physician of the Year is Albert Leroy Gore, a Mississippi College alumnus from the Class of 1947. The oldest of eight brothers, Gore, 89, was a military veteran who rose to

3. Gore

the rank of Brigadier General in the Army. Seven of the Gore brothers graduated from MC.

4. Mississippi College has been rated one of America's top 25 Best College Buys by Forbes Magazine. The magazine and the Center for College Affordability and Productivity produce the annual rankings for campuses nationwide.

5. Mississippi College will host the 76th annual meeting of the Mississippi Association of Colleges and Universities on October 4-6. MC President Lee Royce serves as the president of the organization's board of directors. Featured speaker will be Belle S. Whealan, president of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

REVIVALS AND HOMECOMINGS

1. Oak Grove Church, Scott Association: Revival, Aug. 16-19; Sun. 11 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. with lunch between services; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Marcus Finch, speaker; Paul Earley, pastor. Danny and Nancy Harrison, Music.
2. Mt. Carmel Church, Union: Revival, Aug. 16-19; fellowship meal after Sunday morning worship, with singing in the afternoon; night services, 6:30 p.m. Eddie Pilgrim, speaker; Mack Alford, pastor.
3. Hillsboro Church, Hillsboro: Revival, August 16-19; Sun., 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. 7 p.m.; Daniel Hall, speaker; Mike Smith, music.

hot dogs, and drinks; a love offering will be received. For more information, call (662) 840-1705 or 587-9622.

5. Holly Grove Church, Simpson County: Homecoming/100th anniversary, Aug. 23; singing, 10 a.m., followed by a covered dish lunch and annual cemetery meeting.
6. Bethel Church, Hazlehurst: Homecoming, Aug. 23; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship hour, 11 a.m.; covered dish following. Jerry Glass, speaker; Scott Jones, pastor.

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JONES COUNTY 2009 BIBLE CONFERENCE

August 16 - 18

Salem Heights Baptist Church
601-763-7571 - 5850 Hwy 84 West

Featured Speakers

Sunday, August 16,
9:00 A.M. & 6:00 P.M.

Dr. John Sullivan
and Dr. Jimmy Draper

Monday, August 17,
6:30 P.M.

Dr. Paige Patterson

Tuesday, August 18,
6:30 P.M.

Dr. Junior Hill

BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

Do You Require Signs?

Judges 6:14-16, 36-40; Matthew 16:1-4; Romans 12:1-2

By Lori Clendinning

Ah, the importance of signs... Certainly, life is easier when you have signs to help you find your way. I recall receiving directions to a rural destination and not one sign was used by the host: "Go down to where the road splits, take the right, then take the left where the school used to be before it burned... You can't miss it." (Hal)

My, how signs do help! However, we sometimes ignorantly depend on receiving a sign from God when what we truly need to do is to step out in faith. This is especially true when it comes to knowing His will for our lives, a common struggle for many adults.

"If only I could have a sign from God," is often heard as

believers try to determine their career path or marital choice.

Sometimes less seasoned believers voice their desire for Heavenly indicators of far less important matters: "God, if you want me to buy this outfit, then let it be on sale" or "God, if you mean for me to stop here, then let there be a parking place." Others will even test God as to whether or not to engage in sin: "God, give me a sign if you don't want me to (fill in the blank)."

More often, we struggle to do the part of God's will that we already know to do! "God, if You want me to talk to my neighbor about salvation, then give me a sign. Let him be outside watering their yard when I get home." Absolutely, God wants us to talk with EVERY-

Clendinning

ONE about salvation, whether they're cooped up in their house or not. Yet, sometimes we delay in our obedience because we think we need more proof of God's will. It's not sinful to want to know God's will; in fact, the truth is that God wants us to know His will even more than we want to know it ourselves. His will is revealed to us by Him, and we must seek it. But when His will is made clear in Scripture, as in "Go and make disciples," then there's no voting or debating it; we must simply obey His will without any hesitation.

The Old Testament teaches that looking for signs from God to affirm His will was done sparingly and reverently. In Judges, Gideon asked God for a sign of confirmation before heading into battle with the Midianites. Gideon wanted to know that it was God's voice he heard promis-

ing victory and not his own. A spontaneous barbecue of sorts was the vehicle by which God affirmed His presence in Gideon's life, and Gideon was satisfied enough to focus on the task that God asked of him.

Sometime later, and despite his recent victory, Gideon requested that God prove His presence and approval via a fleece, alternately wet and dry, despite the presence or absence of dew. This was, as Bible scholar W. Gary Phillips stated in the *Holman Old Testament Commentary*, "not an expression of faith but a questioning of God's promises and power. This is far different from asking God to guide by His providential control of circumstances. Furthermore, Gideon was aware that he was acting in disbelief and partial rebellion even in making a request."

Jesus refused the Pharisees' and Sadducees' request for a Heavenly sign. The reason He gave was because they had refused to accept the signs

that were already in place. In other words, we should not expect God to prove Himself to us on our terms. He is God the Almighty, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, not some celestial waiter hovering in the corner, on stand-by to meet our every request.

Becoming more like Jesus and less like the world is one requirement to discerning God's will. The Bible teaches us that we must clear away the sinful influences in our lives in order to hear more clearly from God. Practicing daily spiritual disciplines will help us cultivate renewed minds that focus on Him.

He is God and, yes, He is at work in our lives. We must be open and sensitive to what He is already doing around us. As we obey Jesus Christ and submit our lives and minds to God's purposes, we will be better able to discern His will.

Clendinning is a member of First Baptist Church, Brandon.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

How To Sail Through Life

James 3:1-18

By Jim Burnett

Today in the pharmaceutical world there is a pill for almost every ailment and malady known to man. Whether challenged by high blood pressure, bad cholesterol, diabetes, weight control, mental depression, etc., there is medication available to manage and keep in check your symptoms.

How wonderful it would be if there were an over-the-counter prescription for controlling the human tongue. If so, I would purchase a large supply of this medication for myself and then maybe even share it selectively with others.

In the lesson today, James teaches us that, in Jesus, the human tongue can be tamed and disciplined to be used in a manner that honors the Lord and edifies others.

Speak Carefully
(James 3:1-2)

"Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me." That phrase has to be one of the biggest lies ever perpetrated upon the human race. Yet many of us invoked these words to defend ourselves against a bully or foe when we were smaller. Unfortunately, children continue to use it today even though it is totally false.

Our words carry serious weight with those who hear them. That is why James cautions us to speak carefully so that we do not sin in our speech. Paul echoes this warning in his writings to the Ephesians: "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen" (Ephes. 4:29 NIV).

Burnett

Think back over conversations you had this week. What about the words spoken by you to family members? Did you use kind and gentle words to communicate with your spouse? Did you encourage your children as you dialogued with them? What about in your workplace? Did you tell someone how much their help and friendship has meant to you?

As Christians we must be careful and selective in our speech. Never allow your tongue to be used to spread a filthy or indecent joke. Take no part or pleasure in listening to one either. Always allow the Holy Spirit to filter your thoughts before you put them into words.

Speak Harmlessly
(James 3:3-6)

James used three different illustrations to explain the power of the tongue: horse bits, ship rudder, and a spark. All three of these are small in size, yet produce big results. In the equine world a small piece of metal

weighing less than a pound can control a 1200 pound animal. In the nautical world, a small wheel or rudder can steer a multi-ton vessel. And in the combustible world any fireman can tell you the devastating effects of one carelessly placed spark. The point James was making is that the tongue should be held in check and only used to help people, never to hurt them.

Speak Consistently
(James 3:7-12)

The tongue is the most powerful and potent part of the human body. Only inches in length yet its influence can be immeasurably good or immeasurably bad. James describes the tongue as being a restless evil and full of deadly poison. It has the potential to be used two-dimensionally: to bless God and curse man.

However, as Christians full of the Spirit, we now have the ability to control our vocabularies and speak words consistently to others that encourage, inspire, and enhance. In fact, we are reminded by Paul to "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer

everyone" (Col. 4:6 NIV).

A few careless words can cause colossal and permanent damage to people and relationships. Conversely, positive, encouraging words can bring healing and health. Peter, like James and Paul, counsels Christians about how to use our mouths: "If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God" (1 Peter 4:11 NIV). Wow! What a challenge!

Behave Wisely
(James 3:13-18)

Chapter three ends with James reiterating the importance of a consistent lifestyle. Sometimes in the Christian community, spirituality is measured by conversation. For example, a person who bloviates about prophecy may be considered by others to be mature and wise. But James reminds us that true spirituality and maturity is measured more by what is coming from our lifestyles versus from our lips. The person who is truly wise in God will not only control his tongue but also his conduct.

Burnett is pastor of Willow Pointe Church, Hattiesburg.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted.

Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all

photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

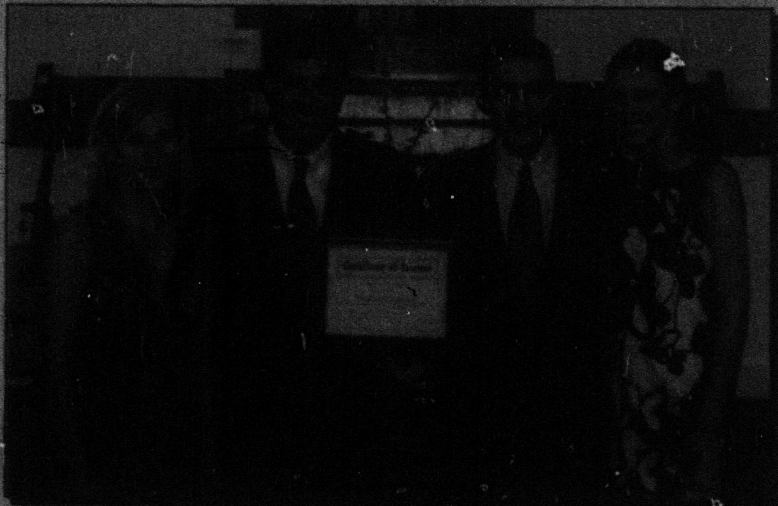
Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

THE BAPTIST Record



1. Baptist Women, Lowery Memorial Church, Blue Mountain



2. Owen licensing



3. Bible Drillers, Lollars Grove Church, Eupora



4. Note burning, Lollars Grove Church, Eupora



1. The Baptist Women of Lowery Memorial Church, Blue Mountain made 37 dresses for their summer mission project. The idea for the project came from Missions Mosaic magazine of the Woman's Missionary Union. The dresses will go to Hemmed in Prayer Ministries which provides clothing for children around the world.

2. New Prospect Church, Oxford, licensed Chase Owen to the gospel ministry Aug. 2. Shown, from left, are Angie White, pastor Ken White, Owen, and Emily Owen.

3. Lollars Grove Church, Eupora, recently held Bible Drills. Pictured are participants.

4. Lollars Grove Church, Eupora, recently celebrated a note burning to mark the payoff of the recently completed Family Life Building. Pictured are (from left) David Oswald, deacon chairman; William Carpenter, pastor; and Scott McBride, former building committee chairman.

5. Emmanuel Church, Grenada, recently held Bible Drills. Pictured are participants.

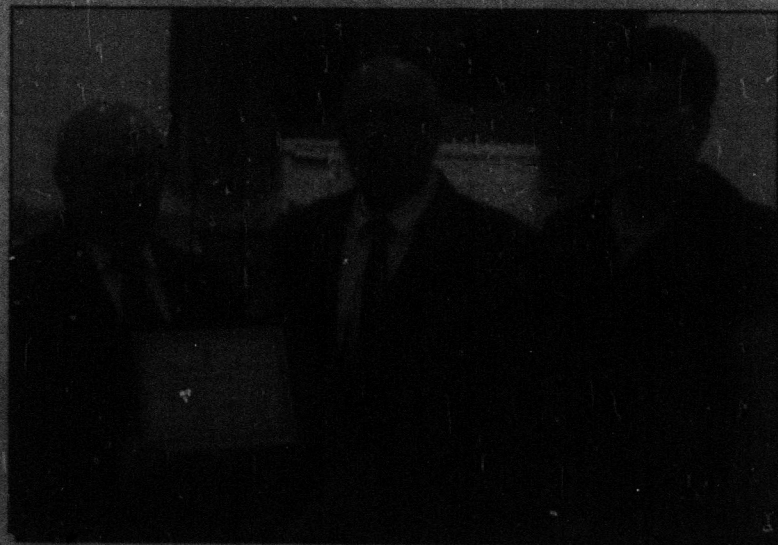
6. Alexander Memorial Church, Washington Association, ordained David Hipp as a deacon May 3. Shown are pastor Rick Griffin, Hipp, and Sarah Hipp.

7. The youth of Tocowa Church, Courtland, made a trip to North Carolina July 18 - 21, enjoying rafting, picnicking, tubing, hiking, rock climbing, and a visit to the Field of the Woods, a display of the Ten Commandments on the mountainside. Shown are the participants.

8. Oak Grove Church, Mendenhall, provided meals for Carpenters for Christ from Macedonia Church, Brookhaven, and groups from Sylcauga, Ala., who are assisting in the rebuilding of Corinth Church, Magee, which was destroyed by a tornado earlier this year.



5. Bible Drillers, Emmanuel Church, Grenada



6. Hipp ordination



7. Tocowa Church, Courtland



8. Oak Grove Church, Mendenhall